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EXTERNAL INTELLIGENCE NOTE

FBI Phoenix
30 May 2019

(U//FOUO) Anarchist Extremists Very Likely Increasing Targeting of US Government Entities in Arizona, Increasing Risk of Armed Conflict

(U) This product expresses the judgments and perspective of this office and may not be reflective of the national perspective of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

(U//FOUO) FBI Phoenix assesses anarchist extremists (AEs) very likely^a are increasing the targeting of US Government (USG) law enforcement personnel and facilities along the Arizona border, increasing the risk of armed conflict. This assessment is made with medium confidence,^b based on human and open source reporting with varying access and reliability, the majority having direct access. FBI Phoenix also assesses Arizona-based AEs likely are increasingly arming themselves and using lethal force to further their goals and in confrontations with ideologically opposed groups. This assessment is made with low confidence, based on reporting from two human sources, one with direct access and less than one year of corroborated reporting and one with direct access, and an online write-in to the FBI Public Access Line.

(U//FOUO) This external intelligence note assumes current border issues^c motivating AEs will not be resolved in the near term and also the majority of AEs do not further their goals with firearms, instead preferring tactics like vandalism, destruction of property, or assault with easily accessible items like sticks, rocks, and bottles. The AE threat to Arizona likely will grow in intensity and frequency in the near to mid-term.^d Also, if AEs more frequently incorporate firearms into their operational plans, they likely will feel more emboldened if confronted by USG entities or ideological opponents during AE operations, increasing the opportunity for an escalation to violence. Reporting from both open and human sources that AE groups have banned firearms or carrying loaded weapons, or reporting of anti-gun rhetoric in AE propaganda, could indicate a shift from this product's assessments. These indicators, if found to be accurate, could cause a change in the confidence levels or in the assessments in general.

^a (U) See Appendix A: Expressions of Likelihood

^b (U) See Appendix B: Confidence in Assessments and Judgments Based on a Body of Information.

^c (U) For the purposes of this external intelligence note, "current border issues" refer to the debate over and construction of a border wall and the USG's handling of the increasing numbers of asylum-seekers, mostly from large Central American migrant caravans.

^d (U) In this external intelligence note, FBI Phoenix defines "near term" as 0-6 months, "mid-term" as 6-12 months, and "long term" as 12 months or longer.

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(U) Source Summary Statement

(U//FOUO) Reporting in this external intelligence note was derived primarily from human sources with varying degrees of access and corroboration and some open sources. Most critical to the key analytical judgments were the human source with direct access reporting on activities of the AE group Border Liberation Front (BLF) along the Arizona-Texas border and the DHS open source intelligence reports that described online AE rhetoric encouraging the targeting of USG entities in Arizona. The human source with direct access reporting on an Arizona-based left-wing militia-like group's monitoring of US Border Patrol and militia groups corroborated the critical sources. The open source articles exclusively provided context. The human source collection occurred between 8 May 2018 and 7 February 2019, and the DHS open source intelligence collection occurred between 16 and 27 February 2019. The collective reporting was current as of 24 April 2019.

(U//FOUO) Anarchist Extremists Very Likely Increasing Targeting of USG Entities in Arizona, Increasing the Risk of Armed Conflict

(U//FOUO) FBI Phoenix assesses Arizona-based AEs very likely are increasing the targeting of USG facilities and personnel, increasing the risk of armed conflict. This assessment is based on increasing human and open source reporting that AEs are encouraging likeminded individuals to retaliate against perceived USG border atrocities. USG actions related to the southwest border over the past year, including military deployment to assist DHS with surveillance, detection, and the hardening of ports of entry, have intensified AEs' hostility towards the USG along the border. AEs view US immigration policies and procedures for handling illegal immigrants—including arrests, removal, and border barriers—as violations of human rights and supporting government facilities and personnel as symbols of US tyranny.

- (U//FOUO) According to a DHS open source intelligence report, in early April 2019, a posting to an AE website called for “disruptive actions” aimed at US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) infrastructure, such as detention facilities, beginning on 1 May 2019 and disruption of the “daily operations of the border, by fighting ICE and the border industrial complex.”¹ Later in the month, a self-identified antifascist who expressed support for AEs stated on a social media site, “Every ICE detention center shall be taken over, with ICE employees detained until every immigrant is freed,” according to a separate DHS open source intelligence report.²
- (U//FOUO) On 16 February 2019, a magazine was published on an AE website to inspire “a trajectory of rebellion” and attacks against USG. The post provided a timeline of past anarchist actions in Arizona that were easily reproducible for anti-border actions, and stated, “We trust you can turn up a number of relevant targets in your town,” according to a DHS open source intelligence report.³
- (U//FOUO) On 27 February 2019, an anonymous user published an article^e discussing the response to the 15 February 2019 US Executive Branch declaration of a national

^e (U) Whether the article's author and the extremist website are the same as those in the 16 February reporting is unknown but possible, based on similar language, themes, targets, and tactics.

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emergency at the border and inciting followers to take an “offensive” posture against ICE and CBP. The user wanted supporters to “sufficiently inhibit” ICE and CBP “through disruption and direct action,” and some of the recommended tactics included occupations, blockades, and disruptions at or near ICE facilities and homes of agency officials, according to a DHS open source intelligence report.⁴

- (U//FOUO) As of January 2019, an Arizona-based left-wing militia-like group, had been monitoring various US Border Patrol activities, right-wing militia groups, and other groups favoring the border wall, mostly to expose human rights abuses and communicate threats to humanitarian groups operating in the area, according to a human source with direct access, much of whose reporting has been corroborated over the past year.^{5, 6}
- (U//FOUO) In 7 December 2018, various AE groups, led by the BLF, were organizing for operations to disrupt USG border security operations and the construction of the proposed wall at the Texas and Arizona borders with Mexico, according to a human source with direct access with a reporting history of less than one year, some of whose reporting has been corroborated.⁷

(U//FOUO) Anarchist Extremists Likely Increasingly Using Firearms To Further Operational Goals and during Confrontations with Opposition Groups in Arizona

(U//FOUO) FBI Phoenix assesses Arizona-based AEs likely are increasingly using firearms to further their organizational goals and during confrontations with groups they ideologically oppose. FBI Phoenix bases this assessment on recent reporting indicating AEs are training with and seeking firearms for “direct action” and countering opposition groups, including government entities. As a contrast, historically anarchists have favored furthering their goals through crimes like destruction of property, which do not require a firearm.

- (U//FOUO) In early December 2018, BLF organizers planned for camps in Texas and Arizona to serve as staging platforms for on-site armed support of the migrant caravans. BLF also planned to train members in fighting, combat, and conducting reconnaissance via drones; encouraged members to bring personally owned firearms; and intended to purchase firearms from a Mexico-based cartel associate, according to a human source with direct access reporting for less than one year, some of whose reporting has been corroborated for less than one year.⁸
- (U//FOUO) According to a human source with direct access, during an Antifa^f training seminar from 6 to 8 April 2018 in Flagstaff, Arizona, individuals from multiple AE and anarchist-leaning groups received firearms familiarization training. The trainers had on display various firearms, among them AR-15s, AK-47s, and handguns.⁹

^f (U) Anti-racists characterize themselves as part of a greater anti-fascist network, commonly referred to by both members and opponents as Antifa. Antifa has included violence in the past against those individuals or groups it opposes, including white supremacists, others perceived as racist, and political groups.

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- (U) In March 2017 an online write-in to the FBI Public Access Line, who had direct access, reported on Phoenix, Arizona-based AE group Redneck Revolt, including on its fundraising for firearms purchases and on its offers to act as armed security for various protests and armed components of Antifa protests.¹⁰

(U) Perspective

(U) Violence between left- and right-wing extremist groups has become increasingly probable within the last few years. Some have persistently claimed the current domestic political environment has emboldened right-wing groups throughout the country, driving anarchists to respond, according to open source reporting.¹¹ At least one foreign government has allegedly stoked political and ideological differences in an attempt to sow political and social discord in the country, according to reporting from a non-bipartisan policy institute.¹² Continued policy discussions surrounding the construction of a border wall and the situation concerning Central American migrant caravans feeds tensions among opposing domestic extremist groups. Moreover, as discussed above, the USG's increasing and prolonged border security operations, and the actions taken against migrants seeking asylum, perceived by AE groups as unjust, are main lines of objection among anarchist groups and serve as force multipliers for AE impetuses to action.

(U//FOUO) This external intelligence note is consistent with previous law enforcement analysis regarding increasing violence among AE groups in the United States. A 26 June 2017 joint California State Threat Assessment Center and Northern California Regional Intelligence Center intelligence bulletin, titled "(U//FOUO) California: Escalation in Anti-Fascist, Right-Wing Extremist Violence," assessed AE and right-wing extremist interactions in California had escalated in violence in recent months. It also assessed public calls by AEs advocating for supporters to bring firearms to events pointed to possible further escalation.

(U) Analysis of Alternatives

(U//FOUO) FBI Phoenix considered the alternative hypothesis that Arizona-based AEs likely will use firearms exclusively for self-defense, whether against USG entities or other opposition groups, instead of offensively during operations. The reporting above of AE groups' focusing in part or whole on reconnaissance or caravan humanitarian support, neither an activity requiring a firearm, would support this judgment. FBI Phoenix deemed this hypothesis less likely, however, based on direct human source reporting detailing various AE groups' plans for "direct action" and "offensive postures" against the government and some of the groups' militant and specific rhetoric regarding counter-USG border activities. Open and human source reporting indicating AE groups have summarily banned the use of firearms or carrying loaded weapons, observed anti-gun rhetoric in AE propaganda, or published AE rules of engagement that stress de-escalation tactics with firearms would increase the likelihood of this alternative.

(U) Outlook

(U//FOUO) FBI Phoenix assesses the AE threat to Arizona likely will grow in intensity and frequency in the near to mid-term as long as USG southwest border security and immigration procedures remain firm or AEs continue to perceive USG actions as unreasonable. In Arizona,

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border issues likely will remain central to AEs' opposition to the federal government and continue to influence target selection for operations. AEs likely will respond aggressively to perceived mistreatment or targeting of immigrants by USG entities or right-wing groups along the border. Also, as AEs more frequently incorporate firearms into their operational plans, they likely will feel more emboldened if confronted by USG entities or ideological opponents, including heavily armed militia groups and white racially motivated extremist groups, increasing the opportunity for an escalation of violence. The assessed increase of armed AE border activity and targeting of government entities in Arizona directly affects USG border operations and personnel safety. Increases in public anti-government demonstrations; known AE groups' discussing, planning, or implementing firearms training; or continued or increased AE rhetoric targeting USG entities or activities at the Arizona border will support FBI Phoenix's assessment of the growing AE threat in the state.

(U) Intelligence Requirements

(U) FBI National Standing Collection Requirements

- (U//FOUO) USA-TERR-CTD-SR-0523-17.III.A.1.C

(U) This external intelligence note was prepared by the Phoenix Field Office of the FBI. Comments and queries may be addressed to the Phoenix Field Intelligence Group at [REDACTED]

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(U) Appendix A: Expressions of Likelihood

(U) Phrases such as “the FBI judges” and “the FBI assesses,” and terms such as “likely” and “probably” convey analytical judgments and assessments. The chart below approximates how expressions of likelihood and probability correlate with percentages of chance. Only terms of likelihood should appear in FBI products; the chart includes terms of probability strictly for comparison, as they sometimes appear in reporting of other government agencies. Furthermore, the FBI does not arrive at judgments through statistical analysis; and will not use terms of probability to convey uncertainty in external FBI intelligence products.

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<i>Terms of Likelihood</i>	Almost No Chance	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Roughly Even Chance	Likely	Very Likely	Almost Certain(ly)
<i>Terms of Probability</i>	Remote	Highly Improbable	Improbable (Improbably)	Roughly Even Odds	Probable (Probably)	Highly Probable	Nearly Certain
	1-5%	5-20%	20-45%	45-55%	55-80%	80-95%	95-99%

(U) Appendix B: Confidence in Assessments and Judgments Based on a Body of Information

(U) Confidence levels reflect the quality and quantity of the source information supporting a judgment. Consequently, the FBI ascribes high, medium, or low levels of confidence to assessments, as follows:

(U) **High confidence** generally indicates the FBI's judgments are based on high quality information from multiple sources. High confidence in a judgment does not imply the assessment is a fact or a certainty; such judgments might be wrong. While additional reporting and information sources may change analytical judgments, such changes are most likely to be refinements and not substantial in nature.

(U) **Medium confidence** generally means the information is credibly sourced and plausible but not of sufficient quality or corroborated sufficiently to warrant a higher level of confidence. Additional reporting or information sources have the potential to increase the FBI's confidence levels or substantively change analytical judgments.

(U) **Low confidence** generally means the information's credibility or plausibility is uncertain, the information is too fragmented or poorly corroborated to make solid analytic inferences, or the reliability of the sources is questionable. Absent additional reporting or information sources, analytical judgments should be considered preliminary in nature.

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(U) Endnotes

¹ (U//FOUO) DHS; OSIR; OSIR-04001-1001-19; 3 April 2019; 3 April 2019; “(U//FOUO) Anarchist extremist calls for May Day activities to target ICE and CBP border infrastructure”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; DHS open source intelligence report of a contributor to an anarchist extremist website. This source is new and the information has not been validated.

² (U//FOUO) DHS; OSIR; OSIR-04001-1078-19; 22 April 2019; 22 April 2019; “(U//FOUO) Anarchist extremist incites violence against white supremacist extremists and threatens U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; DHS open source intelligence report of a social media user. This source is new and the information has not been validated.

³ (U//FOUO) DHS; OSIR; OSIR-04001-0787-19; 19 February 2019; 16 February 2019; “(U//FOUO) Anarchist extremist publishes magazine intended to inspire attacks against U.S. Customs and Border Patrol [sic]”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; DHS open source intelligence report of an anonymous contributor to an anarchist extremist website. This source is new and the information has not been validated.

⁴ (U//FOUO) DHS; OSIR; OSIR-04001-0830-19; 28 February 2019; 27 February 2019; “(U//FOUO) Anarchist extremist incites followers to take an offensive posture against DHS operations and personnel, including ICE and CBP”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; DHS open source intelligence report of an anonymous contributor to an anarchist extremist website. This source is new and the information has not been validated.

⁵ (U) FBI; Case Information; 28 January 2019; 28 January 2019; “[TITLE WITHHELD]”; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; A human source with direct access, much of whose reporting has been corroborated over the past year.

⁶ (U) FBI; Case Information; 7 February 2019; 7 February 2019; “(U) CHS provided information on local and out of state militia matters”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; A human source with direct access, much of whose reporting has been corroborated over the past year.

⁷ (U//FOUO) FBI; IIR; 4 201 2288 19; 17 December 2018; December 2018; “(U//FOUO) Planned Armed Mobilization of Anarchist Actors at US/Mexican Border in Support of Migrant Caravan, as of 7 December 2018”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE; A human source with direct access, some of whose reporting has been corroborated for less than one year.

⁸ (U//FOUO) FBI; IIR; 4 201 2288 19; 17 December 2018; December 2018; “(U//FOUO) Planned Armed Mobilization of Anarchist Actors at US/Mexican Border in Support of Migrant Caravan, as of 7 December 2018”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//LAW ENFORCEMENT SENSITIVE; A human source with direct access, some of whose reporting has been corroborated for less than one year.

⁹ (U) FBI; Case Information; 10 May 2018; 8 May 2018; “(U) [Name withheld] a member of Antifa”; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; a human source.

¹⁰ (U//FOUO) FBI; Case Information; 13 April 2017; 19 March 2017; “(U//FOUO) Recent Guardians related to Phoenix [Name withheld] Activities”; UNCLASSIFIED; UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY; Source is a write-in to the FBI online public access line with direct access to the information.

¹¹ (U) Online newspaper article; *The Washington Post*; “What draws Americans to anarchy? It’s more than just smashing windows”; 10 August 2017; www.washingtonpost.com/local/public-safety/what-draws-Americans-to-anarchy-its-more-than-just-smashing-windows/2017/08/10/030f92e0-2eae-11e7-9534-00e4656c22aa_story.html?utm_term=.7d5db409da6c; accessed on 26 March 2019; Open source reporting from a major US newspaper.

¹² (U) Website; The Center for American Progress; “The origins of Russia’s broad political assault on the United States”; 3 October 2018; <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/reports/2018/10/03/458841/origins-russias-broad-political-assaults-united-states/>; accessed on 1 April 2019; Open source reporting from an independent nonpartisan policy institute.

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